

Conquest of the West 11-Sentence Paragraph

Name: _____

PROMPT: Using information from the document, ideas from the above questions, and your own knowledge, write an 11 sentence paragraph explaining three impacts of westward expansion. You may want to use the words in the vocabulary box.

Because of the discovery of gold in California and the ratification of the Homestead Act, the west was greatly changed due to the great amount of people moving west. First of all, the amount of Buffalo populating the Great Plains was greatly diminished. This was due in part to the new railroads that were being built. The buffalo often slowed production and caused the railroad companies to hire people to kill the buffalo. Another impact of westward expansion, was the forcing of the Plains Indians onto reservations. The growing conflicts with the new white settlers caused the government to pass the Dawes Act to keep the natives under control. The decreasing number of their primary resource, the buffalo, also contributed to putting the natives on reservations because without them it was nearly impossible to live off of government land. The final effect of westward expansion, was the growing demand of beef. The demand of beef coupled with the new railroads caused the cattle industry to flourish, shipping thousands of cattle to markets in the east. The demand for beef caused the overgrazing of land on the plains and the eventual use of barbed wire to contain the cattle, changing the landscape from open to divided. To sum up, the mass kill of buffalo, indigenous Indians being forced onto reservations, and the growing demand for beef all were great impacts of westward expansion.